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# THE OHIO EDUCATIONAL MONTHLY

SEPTEMBER 1897

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# Natural Elementary Geography

(Partial list of Adoptions to August 20.)

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Springfield  
Galion  
Madisonville  
Glenville  
Elyria  
Marion  
Marysville  
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Oxford  
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West Springfield  
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Baltimore

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Washington

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Provo

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Chattanooga

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Martinsburg

## ARKANSAS

Fort Smith

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

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Orland  
Corinna  
Farmington  
Richmond  
Appleton  
Sanford

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Pawtucket

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Halcottville  
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Northville

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Newton  
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Milan  
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text, and materials at hand, the slow, thick-currented souls of the pupils are quickened into new life, resurrected to a new immortality.

This awakening of the pupils' souls to a higher life, can hardly be achieved unless the teacher's soul be also on fire. Fire is needful to start a fire, but, behold how great a conflagration a little spark may kindle.

What is this spark that should glow in every teacher's heart?

It is the habit of loving duty and teaching the children of men so; the habit of going to duty as to a bridal chamber; the habit of anticipating duty as the war horse smell-eth the battle afar off; the habit of awaiting duty with a song of love upon one's lips; the habit of praising God for the gift of duty; the habit of breaking into thanksgiving for the priceless blessing of work.

And what is its reward? The most precious of all things—*liberty*. Wherever there is love of duty there is liberty; without it there is no liberty.

Duty done without love may be heroic, but it is slavish. Love of the dear ones at home makes light the load of the hod carrier. The life of every wife and mother would be ignoble slavery did she not toil in the unspeakable liberty of love. The most gifted artist is but a slavish artisan if he does not work in love of duty. The coarsest artisan is a genuine artist if he but

toil in that liberty which is love of his work.

What nobler aim for the ambitious soul of man than this mission of the teacher, of reconciling man with duty, of restoring him to his allegiance to work, of clearing the way for the fullest expression by his soul of that love of the right which God implanted there when he made him in his own image!

How perverted it has become; how, through generations of false training, the weed, enmity with duty, has grown into the heart of man, overshadowing and well nigh crowding out the sweeter flower, love of duty?

From hearth stone, from school room, from forum, from pulpit, even now, the doctrine of "work a curse" is taught with all the sanction of tradition, with all the authority of caste, with all the holy approval of the church. Yet how blasphemous, how utterly in defiance of all that is taught in the law and the prophets?

How cruelly it gives the crucifying lie to the whole life of the dear Christ.

Here, then fellow teachers, is our highest aim, our most glorious product — To teach the habit of loving duty. Teach we never so little of books, if we but teach this to our children, we have built up their character after the model of the Master, we have ennobled their lives, for we have awakened love in their hearts, and love alone giveth freedom.



## THE STATE LIBRARY AND THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

BY C. B. GALBREATH, *State Librarian.*

The public library should sustain a close relation to the public school. Popular education will find in good books—the master-pieces of the master minds—a most important accessory. Pupils are taught to read that they may use to good purpose the power thus acquired. The ability to interpret thought from the printed page enables the student to master the subject matter of text-books, but it should subserve other useful ends as well. Rightly directed, it is a beneficent potentiality. The knowledge thus gained is not more important than the mental discipline acquired. With proper opportunity the latter makes us students for life. It is the mission of the public library to furnish that opportunity. It therefore deserves a place in our system of popular education.

Such, at least, was the opinion of the early friends of that system in Ohio. They sought to supplement the work of free schools with free libraries. There are those still living who remember the experiment, and any one who cares to investigate may learn something of its results.

The two decades immediately preceding the civil war constitute an important era in the history of our school system. The constitu-

tion of 1851, in response to popular demand, required the General Assembly to make such provision, by taxation or otherwise, as would secure “a thorough and efficient system of Common Schools throughout the State.” The law of 1853, enacted under this provision was wise, liberal, and comprehensive. It is a mile-stone in the intellectual progress of the State. In many respects it must be considered the most important educational measure ever placed on our statute books. This law was in part a codification of previous statutes, but to these were added the following provisions:

1. A State School Tax was substituted for the county tax.

2. The power previously exercised by township trustees was vested in the township board of education.

3. Free education was guaranteed to all the youth of the State, and “rate bills” were abolished.

4. The system was placed under the supervision of the State Commissioner of Common Schools.

5. A fund of one-tenth of a mill yearly was levied for the purpose of furnishing libraries and apparatus for the common schools of the State.

Under the last provision the “old

school libraries of the fifties" had their origin. The tax rate produced for the year 1854 \$55,904.65. In his annual report for that year the State School Commissioner gives a most interesting account of the inauguration of the free library movement. The books were purchased by the Commissioner and distributed through the county auditors. The list included selections from the best literature of the day. The scarcity of juvenile books in those times made this department proportionately small. For adult readers and advanced pupils the selections were excellent. A model library for the common schools of to-day would include some of the same works. I will name a few only by way of illustration: Irving's "Sketch Book," Hawthorne's "Twice Told Tales," Longfellow's Poems, Sparks's "Life of Washington," Creasy's "Fifteen Decisive Battles," Charles Dickens's "History of England." Biography and History were represented by such writers as Abbott, Franklin, Loring, Hildreth, Taylor, Bancroft, and Prescott.

The circulation of the books was not limited to the schools. By express provision of the law any family in the district was entitled to the privileges of the library. The reports from the various districts bear eloquent testimony to the fact that these free libraries were appreciated. In his report

for 1857, School Commissioner Smythe says:

"In almost every village and considerable town in the State, the Library clause has been the most popular feature of the whole School System. Its acceptance has been hearty and enthusiastic. The same is true in regard to many townships in which this law has had anything like a wise and efficient administration."

The movement had the enthusiastic support, not only of the leading educators of the period, but of eminent statesmen and professional men as well. The past few years have witnessed in cities, colleges, and government depositories wonderful progress in the choice of books, their classification, circulation, and all the details of library economy; but they have added nothing to the generous enthusiasm of fifty years ago in behalf of the dissemination of healthful literature among the people, nor have they developed higher conceptions of the possible results of the free library movement. One is tempted here to quote at length, but the limits of this article forbid. I cannot refrain, however, from reproducing in this connection, the words of H. H. Barney under whose direction the first school libraries were sent to all parts of the State:

"How often do the biographies of self-made men point to the reading of some chance volume as the

first incitement to a luminous career of usefulness and distinction! The story of Franklin is familiar to every American household; and fresh and notable illustrations are elicited with each passing year. One of the first minds of Scotland, Hugh Miller, the celebrated harmonist of the Mosaic and Geological records of creation, while receiving little more from schools than a faculty of ready reading, speaks gratefully, in a recent narrative of his early education, of the powerful impulse imparted to his youthful mind by a few old volumes which fell in his way. A story is also told of a library founded in a rugged township of Ohio, by the contributions of its pioneer settlers, to whose inspiration some of the first names in our annals owe the first impulse to a distinguished career; and so, unquestionably, other intellects destined to future eminence and usefulness, will be stimulated by the contents of the unpretending volumes which, within the last twenty-four months, have penetrated every township of Ohio—a visible token of our beneficent system of public instruction.”

It is not difficult to read the realization of this prophecy when we think of the boys who were then in the public schools and whose careers have since shed lustre on the State and the Republic.

In the years 1854-55-56 and '59, \$300,000 was spent for these libra-

ries. The books were well bound and, as before stated, carefully selected. They were not circulated, however, in accordance with any definite plan. The system lacked an authoritative head. The responsibility and power of the State Commissioner of Common Schools ended with the shipment of the books. They were distributed by county auditors to the township boards of education whose property they became. Some of the books were lost. Some found their way into different families. Some were stored in attics to accumulate the “dust of ages.” But in spite of all this waste, the money expended brought good results. The influence of these libraries is still felt. The books were a treasure and an inspiration to many a country boy and girl. In towns and cities they became the nuclei of the splendid libraries of to-day.

The system was brought to an untimely end by those whom it was intended especially to benefit. The cry of economy was raised and the law that made it possible to distribute 400,000 volumes of the best literature of the time to the schools of the State was repealed. Taxation was only temporarily reduced. The farmers pay higher taxes now than they did then, but they do not get the books. And thus the opportunity to put a good library within easy reach of every family in the State was lost.

So much for the school libraries of Ohio. The State Library was intended originally for the use of State officers and members of the General Assembly. In it are kept the printed records of Ohio, other States, and the general government. Prior to the enactment of the law of 1896, it was not, nor did it pretend to be, a public library. Books in almost every department of literature were found on its shelves, but these were loaned only to State officers and members of the Legislature. As a result many of the books were seldom used.

The State Library act of 1896 was introduced by Senator James R. Garfield and became a law near the close of the last session of the General Assembly. It is but just to state that it had the endorsement of Governor Bushnell, the support of every Democratic member of both houses and the almost unanimous vote of the Republicans as well. It places the entire management of the State Library in the hands of a commission. Under their direction it has been opened to the public, and any citizen of the State by complying with the rules and regulations may draw books. In addition to this, provision has been made for traveling libraries. As they have but recently been introduced, a few words of explanation may not be out of place.

A traveling library is a collection of books (twenty-five or more)

sent out by the State Library to a reading club, an association of citizens, a board of education, or a public library, to be kept three months. This time may be extended. The State Library will furnish forms for bond and application to those wishing to receive a traveling library. On receipt of a request in accordance with the forms furnished by the State Library the books will be shipped. The parties receiving them must pay transportation both ways. If a list of books desired is sent with the application, it will be furnished as nearly as possible; if only the general subjects are named, books relating to those subjects will be sent. The only expense to the borrowers will be the cost of transportation.

There is nothing intricate or untried in this system. It is no longer an experiment. For years it has been in successful operation in the State of New York. It has been introduced into a number of other States and, so far as reported, with satisfactory results. It has much to commend it. The bond insures against loss and the cost of transportation really does not amount to more than a small charge for the care and storage of the books while they are not in use.

The objects of the traveling libraries are: 1, To furnish good literature to the public; 2, To strengthen small libraries; 3, To create an interest in the establishment of new



libraries. The Teachers' Reading Circle has done much to prepare the way for this work. Free libraries containing the books recommended for pupils would certainly find a welcome reception in many schools of the State. Several of these libraries have already been issued, most of them to ladies' clubs. The results have been very encouraging. The books have been returned in good condition, accompanied, in almost every instance, with letters showing that they have been well used and highly appreciated. Many new applications are on file, a number from public schools.

The writer is aware that this article may meet the eyes of the tax-payer. All this will cost money, we are told, and taxes are already sufficiently high. True, the additional books that the State Library will need to supply the increasing demand will cost something. A fractional part of the sum expended in the period to which

we have referred will answer the purpose. Economy in other matters, notably, in the publication of voluminous reports that are seldom read, would effect a net saving sufficient to provide for the traveling libraries. But even if they should involve a slight additional expense, their service to the State would yield an ample return. Certainly no one will object if to the common schools are restored some of the privileges they enjoyed forty years ago.

In conclusion I desire to assure the teachers of Ohio, in the language of my annual report, that it is the ambition of the librarian to see the State Library the center of a system of traveling libraries that shall reach every village and school district in the State where good books are desired and conditions warrant the belief that a taste for healthful reading may be encouraged. No class of persons can do more to promote this work than the teachers of our common schools.



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30. Sto. from Shakespeare Vol. II	"	"	156	.50	.50	4 and 5

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